A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION encouraging the Kentucky General Assembly to take steps to allow public input and hold public hearings during the redistricting process.

WHEREAS, fair elections are fundamental to the democratic process; and
WHEREAS, fairly drawn electoral districts are fundamental to fair elections; and
WHEREAS, a transparent redistricting process, one that includes public hearings, the opportunity for credible interest groups or individuals to present proposals of their own, and the opportunity for comment on maps submitted to the General Assembly for consideration prior to a vote will help engender public confidence in the integrity of the election process; and
WHEREAS, a closed redistricting process, one in which legislative districts are drawn by political parties with no public input or scrutiny, will weaken public confidence in the political process; and
WHEREAS, Kentucky’s 2020 elections, through a bipartisan agreement on polling places, absentee ballots, drop boxes and other details, created better confidence in our democratic elections in contrast to other states that saw fierce rancor and expensive litigation; and
WHEREAS, nationally, and in states and communities across the country, partisan divisions have raised tensions to levels rarely seen in American history; and
WHEREAS, this is simply not a time to allow politics to intrude excessively into something as fundamental as a redistricting plan that will govern Kentucky Congressional, Kentucky House of Representatives, and Kentucky Senate maps for a decade to come; and
WHEREAS, moderate legislators are bailing out of politics all together because partisan gridlock, largely caused by pressures related to primary races in heavily gerrymandered districts, is pushing politics to the extremes and making compromise all but impossible; and
WHEREAS, significant population shifts in Kentucky over the past decade will
require significant redrawing of legislative districts for the Kentucky House of Representatives, Kentucky Senate, and Kentucky Congressional districts; and

WHEREAS, a good faith effort to keep partisanship to a minimum through the redistricting process is the best way to instill confidence in the democratic process of electing our representatives; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly intends to use a transparent process for revising districts, to consider the thoughts and concerns of citizens before adopting new boundaries, and to adopt final maps that are fully consistent with constitutional requirements, applicable laws, and the principle of equal respect for all citizens of the Commonwealth;

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the Senate concurring therein:

Section 1. The General Assembly agrees that in setting new boundaries for legislative districts, it is good practice to seek robust citizen input, offer opportunities for citizens to review proposed boundaries, and allow a reasonable period of time for citizens to prepare and submit comments, concerns, and revision requests before any legislative votes.

Section 2. The Kentucky General Assembly is encouraged to incorporate opportunities for public input in redistricting laws and to take steps to allow public input in the redrawing of legislative district lines.

Section 3. The Kentucky General Assembly is further encouraged to hold public hearings to allow input from citizens, organizations, and stakeholders.